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Chapter 7

Some Like it Dubbed. Translating Marilyn Monroe.

Charlotte Bosseaux

Introduction

According to Dyer (1979), the way we read signs of performance is culturally and historically bound. Such a statement resonates in a translation context: audiences in different countries will interpret performances according to their specific historical and cultural backgrounds. It thus seems relevant to wonder what happens to performance in a filmic context, and more particularly to the vocal performance of film actors in translation.

In France, when foreign musical films are released in cinemas, their dialogues are usually dubbed while songs are kept in the original with subtitles, as in Singin' in the Rain (1952) or the Sound of Music (1965). In certain instances, however, the whole soundtrack (speech, narration and song alike) is dubbed. This happens with Walt Disney's movies for instance, so that children, their main audience, are not excluded and can enjoy the whole of the performance. Surprisingly, this is also the case for Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953, dir. Howard Kawks) since the technique used to translate adult drama is normally that mentioned previously for Singin' in the Rain, for instance.

This chapter explores how choices of dubbing voices could change the way a French audience perceives foreign actors/characters in translation. I consider an iconic star, Marilyn Monroe (1926–1962). I look specifically at Monroe's performance in the famous movie Gentlemen Prefer Blondes in which her voice, whether in dialogues or in songs, can be interpreted as a

dramatic mirror of her personality. I show how Monroe has been translated in French through a multimodal analysis of verbal and non-verbal elements including vocal delivery and shot composition.

Performance and characterisation

The main aim of this chapter is to propose a multimodal, analytical model to be used when analysing audiovisual material taking into consideration the aural and visual elements composing a performance whether we are dealing with dialogues or singing parts. This analytical model is being created to help identifying aspects of characterisation in an audiovisual text and then in its translation to see how there could be shifts between the way characters are created in the source and target audiovisual texts. The analysis considers what can be referred to as pure dialogue as well as music-specific dialogue, with more emphasis on the latter since this volume deals with music and translation. In what follows, I consider spoken and sung dialogues together because in the musical film under analysis, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, songs, like dialogues, function as ‘narrational device(s)’ (Garwood, 2006, 93); they are narrative elements contributing to characterisation and plot development. Let me first present characterisation.

Characterisation — the way characters are created on screen through actors’ performance, speech and voice characteristics — has received little attention in Film Studies. Richard Dyer’s Stars (1979/1998) is perhaps the most significant reference on the topic. Dyer questions the way stars signify their character, as well as challenging the notion and construction of that ‘character’. He presents ten signs that ‘viewers latch on [to] in constructing characters’ (Dyer, 1979, 120–132) among which audience foreknowledge, character appearance, speech and gestures, as well as the mise en scène (including colour,

framing and placing of actors) is considered. These elements are interesting parameters to analyse character construction as they are affected by translation. In the context of translation, some of them will stay unchanged, namely, physical gestures and *mise en scène*. However, audience foreknowledge will vary when an audiovisual product is screened in a foreign country, and, through dubbing, so will the speech of characters.

Performance in a filmic context is defined by Dyer as ‘what the performer does in addition to the actions/functions she or he performs in the plot and the lines she or he is given to say. Performance is how the action/function is done, how the lines are said’ (Dyer, 1979, 151). It is linked to characterisation and is also referred to as the ‘revelation of the interior states of characters’ (Smith, 1995, 151). From a semiotic perspective, signs of performance are facial expressions, voice intonations, accents and colloquialisms, gestures and body postures. In what follows, I subscribe to the view that a character’s revelation of interiority is realized through facial and physical gestures in tandem with vocal delivery. Moreover, I claim that dubbing has a direct impact on performance because what is said, and how it is said, is inevitably altered.

My claim situates performance as a key component of ‘film style’ (Klevan, 2005). Andrew Klevan has developed a ‘method for sustaining attention to a performance’ (2005, 103) focusing on individual scenes being ‘responsive to their unfolding’ (2005, 7). Various elements are taken into consideration in the moment such as body posture, items of clothing and facial expressions. Klevan links performance to characterisation:

attending to the moment-by-moment movement of performers also enhances our understanding of film characterisation. It encourages us to a character’s

physical and aural detail and reminds us, because we are prone to forget in our literary moods, of their ontological particularity in the medium of film. A living human being embodies a film character (Klevan, 2005,7).

Supporting the research question, an emphasis is laid on the actor as much as the character they embody. In interrogating this connection, Klevan investigates performers':

position and perspective (the relationship of the performer to the camera, and their position within the shot), place (the relationship of the performer to location, décor, furniture, and objects); and plot (the relationship of the performer to narrative developments) (Klevan, 2005, preface).

For instance, he describes Joan Bennett's performance in Fritz Lang's Secret Beyond the Door (1948). The film tells the story of a woman who marries a man with an emotional disorder. If the plot of the film 'could be regarded as obvious, crude and even banal' (2005, 73), this is not the case of Bennett's performance:

During threatening moments, as she waits to discover the secret beyond the door, Bennett does not simply collapse her internal feelings into sufferings or distress. Her vocal delivery is deep and breathy, rounded and smooth, and never high-pitched. Sensuously rhythmic, it modulates, caresses and nurtures even her most anxious thoughts. She contains the turbulence as if relishing her passion on the verge of release (2005: 76).

This interpretation refers to the musicality of her vocal delivery, emphasizing pace, timbre and pitch. These parameters, which are so closely linked to emotional states (see for example the theoretical work exposed by Juslin and Sloboda, 2001), supplement the given dialogue and become a signifying agent. Their inclusion is integral and interactive. When studying a sequence, every physical and aural gesture matters; movement is often privileged due to its visual immediacy but both the audio and visual movements need recognition:

We may well be rewarded for concentrating on a performer as they *merely* turn a street corner, sit in a chair, touch a wall, move around a bedroom or carry a bunch of flowers. Fresh aspects of even familiar films emerge when we attend to gestures, postures, expressions and voice – and how they are situated (Klevan, 2005, preface).

Meaning on screen is thus conveyed not only with words but through vocal register, timbre, tempo and volume, and by body gestures, their intensity, direction and pace. Body language (proxemics and kinesics) is an important parameter when understanding characters; visual clues, not only dialogues, tell us about characterization and relationships. Nonetheless, in translation or dubbing bodily language is retained.

The delivery of dialogue is crucial but a consistent delivery across cultures is not usually possible. Although Klevan seldom mentions vocabulary or tone, his approach to scenes persistently mentions voice: this is particularly pertinent from an interrogation of the effect of translation on film. Klevan's work highlights that not only vocabulary matters and that the various elements of performance interact to make meaning. His attentive descriptions combining the visual and the aural have informed my work. My multimodal analysis focuses

on the vocabulary used in tandem with the actors' style of performance with a particular emphasis on vocal delivery since voice itself (incorporating vocal tone, timbre, dynamic and pace) and what is said to change in dubbing, having a notable impact on characterization.

Like Klevan, I argue for a 'greater sensitivity' to film performance (2005, 15); an angle which is also found in the works of other film scholars such as Smith (2007). His method 'requires that we slow down, stop, and dwell, so that we can savour the intensity of interaction, an intonation or an expression – the reverberations – and reflect (on) the resonance' (Klevan, 2005, 103). How we describe and interpret films in such a context becomes even more significant and one of the challenges of describing films is to 'evoke in words a medium that is primarily visual and aural, and *moving*' (2005: 16). When describing and interpreting scenes there is a process of 'fictionalization', and this 'fictional charge' needs to be conveyed to viewers. In this article, which is part of my current book project (Bosseaux: forthcoming), I endeavor to provide detailed descriptions of film sequences for these very reasons.

Multimodal analysis

This multimodal analysis considers verbal and non-verbal elements. The chosen verbal elements belong to a film dialogue, consisting of all the spoken lines uttered, with attention to both what is said and how it is said, in an audiovisual product.

Beyond the actor's role, referred to above, dialogues seem to have been neglected in Film Studies:

although what the characters say, exactly how they say it, and how the dialogue is integrated with the rest of the cinematic techniques are crucial to

our experience and understanding of every film since the coming of sound,
[...] canonical textbooks on film aesthetics devote pages and pages to editing
and cinematography but barely mention dialogue (Kozloff, 2000, 6).

However dialogues are used when discussing *mise en scène*, performance and voice in Gibbs (2002), Klevan (2002) and Smith (2007) even if they are not at the forefront of the analysis. When questioning the role of film dialogues, I consider the 'power of language to define the tone and set the mood' (Desilla, 2009, 118) in sequences of original films and their adapted translated versions (in reference to both the spoken dialogue and sung lyrics. But how does all this matter in translation? What affect and significance does a change in vocal timbre, accent and colloquial usage have on the characterisation of the film?

Characters' point of view, their inner states and emotions are reflected through various means, some of which will not change in dubbed products, namely the visual components. What changes however is what characters say and how they say it, a dimension that can be broadly described as 'voice quality'. Voice quality is defined as 'the permanently present, background, person-identifying feature of speech' (Crystal, 1991, 376) from a linguistic perspective with characteristics such as tempo or pitch, and 'impressionistically' with affective terms such as 'poignant'. For example, Klevan uses terms such as 'breathy', and 'gleeful' (2005) and Smith (2007) writes about 'gentle' rhythms and 'nurturing' qualities of voices.

Studies on voice are on the increase but it is fair to say that it is still a rather under researched field. Major studies started in the 1980's within psychoanalytical frameworks (see Chion, 1982/1999). Recent studies focus more on practical aspects of voices with detailed film

analysis. For instance Susan Smith (2007, 164) focuses on the ‘cinematic contribution’ of voice and its singing, speaking, verbal and non-verbal aspects’ and acknowledges ‘the capacity of the human voice to bring a quality of feeling and texture of meaning to the medium of film that may not be possible to convey through the visuals alone’ (ibid). She is interested in ‘vocal release’; moments when actors convey a particular feeling through their voices. Parallels are drawn between the results of actions (suspense, romance), the use of the voice (or style of delivery) and actors’ physical gestures and positions on the screen (the latter of which relates to Klevan’s work).

Smith describes voices at length: their tone, pitch, timbre, and how they communicate various feelings. For instance, she comments on Bing Crosby’s voice in Going My Way (Leo McCarey, 1944). Crosby is playing Father Chuck O’Malley, an Irish priest. In one scene he sings a lullaby to an older priest ‘introducing a slightly wavering quality into some of his higher notes renditions of certain words and syllables’ (Smith, 2007, 233). This is known as ‘upper mordent’ and is Crosby’s ‘signature vocal technique’ (Giddins, 2001, 11 in Smith 2007, 233):

This technique is a well-recognized hallmark of Crosby’s singing style and one that, in revealing something of this singer’s Irish immigrant roots, finds what is surely one of its most lyrically apposite and poignant expression here (ibid).

This reference to accent and pitch inflection brings about issues of characterisation in the original film and its translated versions as these are parameters which inevitably change.

Barthes' notion of the 'grain of voice' is also central to this study, especially as we are investigating Monroe's voice. For Barthes, the 'grain of voice' is 'the materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue' (1977, 182). Barthes developed this concept in relation to vocal music. The 'grain is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs' (1977, 188). Barthes crucially distinguishes between voices that have 'grain' and those which do not to appreciate the pleasures of listening to a voice that has traces of a performer's body, giving it a certain texture or even roughness. The grain is the 'precise space (genre) of the encounter between a language and a voice' (1977, 181). Listening to the 'grain' means listening to our 'relation with the body of the man or the woman singing or playing and that relation is erotic' (ibid.). The link with Monroe could not be more obvious. We are reminded that physical and verbal elements combine to make meaning: the audio and visual should and will be considered as a whole in original products therefore both are needed in translation.

When dealing with voice Chion (1999, 172) comments that:

the work that especially American actors devote to vocal accents and timbres also allows them to reassert their identity as actors, to show that they are not just blank canvases for makeup, but that they can reinvent and master their craft through technique, the body and voice.

The consequence of this voice work is that 'the audience becomes aware of the voice as an entity distinct from the body, even when it comes from the very center of the image' (1999, 173). The source of the sound is understood to be what is seen. After Jean Renoir, Chion explains that 'accepting dubbing is like stopping believing in the oneness of the individual'¹

as body and voice can be separated. In relation to Barthes' 'grain' this seeming contradiction prompts another question: is it possible to separate Monroe's voice from her body? Is this character specific meaning lost in the dubbed version of the film?

Voice and characterization have been investigated sporadically in audiovisual translation studies. For instance, Régine Hollander (2001) compares the dubbed and subtitled French versions of Oliver Stone's Natural Born Killers (1994). She considers the speech of the characters, their accents and how these are used for characterisation (2001, 84). For the purpose of the film, Woody Harrelson adopted a southern accent which is used to situate him both socially and geographically. When dubbed, Hollander points out that his French voice is 'neutral' and concludes that there is a loss in signifying character details. Hollander argues that it is impossible to convey in another language the network of associations evoked by the dialogue, images (and visual effects) and sound (2001, 79). Like Renoir, she also uses the term 'unicité' (unity / oneness) and favours subtitling as it keeps the oneness of the actor but recognizes dubbing should be used if the image prevails since subtitles distract viewers (2001, 86).

The debate between subtitling and dubbing is not central here but Hollander's work highlights the difference between the 'properties' or 'characteristics' of original voices, and prompts us to think about what is an 'appropriate' choice of voice for a dubbed version. To what extent do viewers engage differently because of changes in voice? A dubbed voice changes pitch, articulation, class, regional context, colloquialisms, individual turns of phrase, timbre, educational levels and other suggestions of cultural positions and capabilities.

Marilyn Monroe

Marilyn Monroe (1926–1962), a model turned actress, reached an iconic status by 1952, known for her stylized walk, blond hair and makeup. Notably, she was also a singer and performed in some of her movies, including Gentlemen Prefer Blondes. As an internationally renowned Hollywood star, Monroe's fame can still be seen through the number of her 'wannabies' (Konkle, 2008, 100). She notes that a 'quick Google search for Marilyn Monroe impersonators in America returns over 30,000 results' and the same search in Europe and Asia returned 15,000 and 10,000 hits, respectively (ibid).

In Heavenly Bodies, Dyer writes on the:

- importance of sexuality in Marilyn Monroe's image [...] Monroe = sexuality
- is a message that ran all the way from what the media made of her in the pin-ups and movies to how her image became a reference point for sexuality in the coinage of everyday speech (1987, 20).

He describes her as a 'sexual spectacle' (ibid, 22), 'as luscious as strawberries and cream' (the Evening News 1956, quoted in Dyer 1987, 42). Dyer's reading of Monroe is primarily visual; she exerts 'naturalness and overt sexuality' (1987, 35) and her full figure was used shamelessly in her movies in 'tits and arse shots' (ibid, 22).

Monroe was a woman of many contradictions; at times described as a child in a woman's body, love queen, bimbo, 'dumb blond sex-symbol type' (Dyer, 1987), and a cultural icon. She is 'available, vulnerable, desirable, non-threatening' (ibid, 102):

Besides bloneness, Monroe also had, or seemed to have, several personality traits that together sum up female desirability [...]. She looks like she's no trouble, she is vulnerable, and she appears to offer herself to the viewer, to be available (Dyer, 1987, 45).

She was well known for her 'Monroeisms', 'typical of the dumb blonde tradition to which she in part belongs' (Dyer, 1987, 35). These 'series of gags' (ibid) or 'quips and sexual double entendres' (Banner, 2008, 8) added a comedic effect to the films she was starring in.

According to Billy Wilder, director of Some like it Hot, 'She was an absolute genius as a comedic actress, with an extraordinary sense for comedic dialogue' (anon: online). She would achieve this through her vocal timbre and register (tessitura) emphasising the gap between low and high ranges depending on the scene content.

'As a blonde in 1950s Hollywood film industry, Monroe was considered the sexual [and racial] embodiment of perfection' (Handyside, 2010, 22). Monroe 'as the ideal blonde star' was well known in France. When Niagara (1953) was released there, Monroe was 'read as a vamp, the sexual woman by excellence' and the image she 'projected' in this movie 'firmly established her in the French imagination as the sexual American woman' (2010, 296). Her eroticism was seen as 'a blend of innocence and knowingness'; she exhibited a 'vampy-yet-girlish sexuality' (2010, 296 and 298).

Monroe star status has received much attention but surprisingly there is very little written about her voice, which scholars usually mention in passing. For instance Dyer refers to the 'combination of sexuality and innocence' in her voice (1998, 31). Banner (2008, 8) mentions her 'wiggling walk, jiggling breasts, childlike voice, and pouty lips', a description which

refers us back to issues such as timbre, tone, range volume, and articulation to be analysed later. Konkle observes that to 'prevent any sexual power she might have from overcoming spectators, [she] comes, of course, with a breathy innocent voice' (2008, 102), again reminding us of timbre issues. Finally, Piercy links her voice to vulnerability: 'Part of what men read into her and what indeed she presented was a child in a woman's body—the breathy voice that so famously embodies that vulnerability, the inability to protect herself' (2002, 104).

One of the numerous fan websites on Monroe has a fact page on her voice² and its different qualities: high pitch, breathy timbre, fast pace, excited tone and all the emotional connotations these attributes have. We learn that as a child/teenager she had very low self esteem, and stammered:

At times like this, her voice was described by drama coach Natasha Lytess as a 'tight squeak' [...] To a large extent, the Marilyn voice of the first half of her career, with its exaggerated clarity and staccato stressing of 'd' and 't', was the result of tutoring from Lytess. Marilyn was, more than once, lampooned by her directors for what Otto Preminger [...] described as her 'grave ar-tic-yew-lay-shun.' Stylized as this may have been, it finally helped Marilyn overcome her tendency to stutter. It is this breathy whisper which generations of later actresses have employed as a surefire signifier of sexual attraction and availability (anon: online).

When filming, Monroe was apparently often asked to 'lower her tone' and 'Phil Moore, her coach on Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, refers to her special appeal in song: 'She always sounds

as if she's just waking up. You'd be surprised what kind of effect that has on male listeners' (ibid).

According to Konkle, Marilyn's regular non-film voice was not breathy or so pronounced. He claims that she worked on her vocal delivery to become Monroe the film star. This voice work was part of her character construction. The on-screen Monroe was a performance: 'from her hair to her voice to her walk' (2008, 104). Monroe's breathy, girlish voice quality can thus be considered a crucial part of her star status and characterisation.

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953)

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (GPB), directed by Howard Hawks, is based on Anita Loos' novella of the same title (1926), which 'celebrated showgirls and critiqued the male fascination with them' (Banner, 2008, 20). Monroe plays the role of Lorelei Lee, a 'chorus girl' (Dyer, 1987, 21) who is only interested in wealthy men who can offer her diamonds. Significantly, it is a musical; in this role Monroe sings and dances. Her voice is all important.

Smith (2006) studies the way music, performance and narrative interact in musicals, with reference to American musicals including the film version of West Side Story (1961). The genre is seen as a platform through which issues of race, gender identity, and oppression can be articulated via songs and dancing. Although Smith is concerned with issues that reflect society at large, such a view of the film musical can also be applied to GPB since musical numbers are used to convey particular feeling and songs function as 'narrational device[s]' or elements (Garwood, 2006, 93). Like characters themselves, songs have deliberate stylistic features, delivering a text via rhythm, melody and so on. A solo song becomes a kind of monologue which offers supplementary details to the text via its special delivery. Songs have

an expressive potential beyond speech, due to the refined use of the voice. Pitch is controlled and shaped, timbre is focused and rhythmic precision. Therefore songs contribute to characterization and plot development; their lyrics are meaningful in terms of the fictional world of the story, but as important is the musical shaping of that message.

In GPB, 'the musical form was ideal for Hawks' to project the character's personality and role: the 'predatory Lorelei and man-hungry Dorothy' (Blauvelt 2010, online). Lorelei, a 'cynical gold-digger', 'fully understands how to use her sex appeal to trap rich men and is motivated above all by cupidity'. Her dialogue is given special attention: it 'is self-aware and witty, signalling (to us and to herself) amusement at what she is doing even while she is playing the fausse-naïve' (Dyer 1998, 130) and this is treated musically through variations of pitch, timbre and tone for instance.

Dyer emphasizes the 'extraordinary impact' of Lorelei's 'physicality', 'infantile manner' and 'witticisms'. She is 'in control of her physicality', she 'pretends to be infantile' and her 'wit expresses an intelligent but cynical appraisal of the situation' (ibid). Some of her lines 'indicate her manipulative propensities' while at the same time 'evoke innocent pleasure in being sexy' (Dyer, 1998, 131). What is said provides as much characterisation as how it is said. The controlling features cited here are either visual, or given by the script writer, director et al. What is provided solely by Monroe, which is lost in translation, is her voice – in other words the character refining details of her child-like voice, witty flair and sensuous vocal allure.

Case study: Monroe's voice

Many of the critical comments cited previously refer to the visual attributes of film. To this, should be added the pleasure of hearing her voice, with its mixture of breathiness and silliness. The visual and the aural combine to project meaning, a character, a role, and a pawn in a story. The sexual symbol she became was both drawn from her physical visual and verbal aural dimensions.

According to Garwood, the music 'provides a space for a song to be played out in its entirety as the central focus of the scene' (2003, 112); this is quite fitting for instance in the song and dance sequence 'Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend' (DGBF) as Monroe is the centre of the scene. The visual component maps onto the aural dimension and vice versa, both working to construct the character. In what follows, I analyse the effect of, and the dramatic role played, by her voice in this film. Dyer sets out relevant caveats and value judgements, setting a tone for the analysis:

I feel I should mention beauty, pleasure, delight [...] We should not forget what we are analysing gains its force and intensity from the way it is experienced, and that ideology shapes the experiential and affective as much as the cognitive. When I see Marilyn Monroe I catch my breath; when I see Montgomery Cliff I sigh over how beautiful he is [...] I don't want to privilege these responses over analyses, but equally I don't want, in the rush to analysis, to forget what it is I'm analysing. And I must add that, while I accept utterly that beauty and pleasure are culturally and historically specific, and in no way escape ideology, none the less they are beauty and pleasure and I want to hang on to them in some form or another (Dyer, 1998, 162).

Describing musical voices is an arduous endeavour and involves discussion of both the spoken and sung voice. Various elements require exploration: timbre (vocal quality), rhythm and pace, tessitura (vocal range), breath control, articulation (how the voice approach the notes and syllables) and the dynamic shape of specific spoken or sung phrases. It is highly subjective. I accept this, but I do not rely on surveys to corroborate my feelings witnessing Monroe's performance. Rather, I leave this perspective to scholars from Audience Studies in preference of an analysis which recognizes Monroe's beauty and acknowledges the pleasure her performance conveys. Ultimately my goal is to create a multimodal method to analyse the contribution of vocal performance in original and dubbed products.

Throughout the film, Monroe's voice is versatile. At times, it is grounded and to the point, for instance when she asks a waiter to tell her fiancé to come to her changing room (scene 3, time 4.23). Her voice has a regular rhythm, it is mid range and clearly articulated with a direct chest voice and clear consonants. Vocal delivery then changes markedly when she speaks to her fiancé: the register shifts upwards, timbre thins and becomes more restricted, using her head voice, producing a sound comparable to a high pitch squeak. Why the change? The controlled voice adopts qualities which are more stereotypically feminine (high pitch) when she tries to get something out of men. She uses a breathy timbre and quiet delivery (connoting submissiveness) when she pretends to be shy, moving her body in a languid girly manner, whispering a sexy thank you after being told how fabulous she looks (scene 3, 5.11). Finally, when she utters Monroeisms there is a level of comedy: for example, when her fiancé asks if her engagement ring is the right size, she answers candidly in a confident mid range tone, with an evenly spaced rhythmic delivery, that diamonds are never too big; her voice being a little bit louder and using a sustained upper pitch on the actual words (scene 0, 5.22). The same versatility is also at play during her singing performance.

To Monroe's delivery, body postures and facial movements, must also be added the shape she makes with her lips, the way she opens her eyes, her posing sideways so one can admire her curved silhouette. All these give different signals: her 'parted lips give the signal 'yielding sexuality' but the quivering upper lip (in fact quivering to hide her high gum line) may also be read as giving off the signal 'vulnerability'' (Dyer, 1998, 139). The verbal and the physical combine to construct a multilayered personality.

In the musical numbers, Monroe is the visual focus of the scene whether she is standing centre screen or seating showing her naked back to the audience, e.g. at the start of the DGBF sequence (scene 23, 1.06.32). The particular rhythmic qualities of the various songs govern the editing and shot composition. Monroe is shot in a mixture of long shots, middle long shots and middle shots; that way we can fully appreciate her full figure and see different parts of her body as she moves to the music, for most of the times on beat. Her clothes are significant too. For instance in DGBF she is wearing a long pink dress with a pouf of fabric on her bottom, long pink gloves and diamonds around her wrists and neck. She bears all the Hollywood hallmark of a sexy celebrity; she is a spectacle. The objects that she uses are meaningful too. Props are used to communicate aspects of her personality and moods as in DGBF when she uses a fan to tap playfully on the faces of various men, at significant points (for example, when uttering no or just before or after she is saying it) while singing about her love for men who can provide for her and rejecting those who cannot.

Monroe modulates her vocal delivery, especially her timbre, when singing: she uses vocally clipped, staccato upper register squeak when communicating both outrage and amusement. An operatic style trill, at the other extreme, is produced through a full chest voice, in her

lower register, offering a deep and sultry voice with much head resonance and vibrato.³ She uses register to convey her social position, adopting a low register sophisticated voice with clear diction in contrast to her higher vocal tone which is less direct due to the breathy quality or vibrato. She plays with the sonorous qualities of the words, pronouncing the same word differently: for instance a 'no' can be uttered like a scream (situated in her head voice, a high pitch forte dynamic, tight throat utterance with shrill overtones), as if she were a poor vulnerable woman, but then offering a playful tone (in a lower register, with a thinner timbre – so as not to convey the same confidence as discussed above – with a more legato articulation). In dance sequences, Monroe moves smoothly and her quivering lips and batting eyes also convey her sexiness. Her vocal and physical tones are mostly seductive. The visual combines with the aural, to become interactive, to portray Lorelei as a sexy, teasing, playful but also childish woman. Such interactivity has been suggested by Kathryn Kalinak's work on film (1992) and is implied by Claudia Gorbman's work on interrogating the music-image relationships in film when she discussed 'mutual implication' (1987).

Hence, when Monroe sings her body movements, facial expressions and quivering lips combine with the lyrics and vocal quality to characterize her as a sexy and amusing woman. In the French version, the facial expressions, movements and gestures remain but the dubbed version removes Monroe's vocal nuances. The French Lorelei, played by French actress Mony Dalmès in spoken dialogues, and Claire Declerc for the sung parts, sounds generally more mature, more in control, due to the solid chest voice, lower register and fuller tone. Her voice does not have Monroe's signature squeakiness. She generally sounds more formal and serious, even classier due to the consistent and less diverse vocal qualities at play. Generally the rounded vowels and direct projection sound haughtier. Around men, the English language Lorelei puts herself in a childish position adopting a squeaky voice but in French she is

modified, so as to seem more in control, through her direct intonation and certain vocabulary choices (e.g. higher register). All in all, the French Lorelei's timbre is less diverse, the rhythm and pace of her voice is more grounded, her tessitura is less vast as her voice is quite nasal and she does not control her breath very much. Moreover, her articulation is not as detailed or varied and the way her voice approaches the musical notes and syllables shows less range. Finally, and very significantly, even though the French Lorelei still moves her body and parts her lips in the same way as the American one, one can nevertheless argue that there is a contraction between Lorelei's French voice and her body. If we go back to Barthes, we must wonder what happened to the grain of her voice, the body in the voice, and unfortunately we have to conclude that there is not much trace of Lorelei's body in her French voice(s).

Does this completely contradict the original's characterisation? Not fully, as original Lorelei is very much in control of her life. However, one could say that original Lorelei is more multifaceted or multilayered whereas French Lorelei is more linear and restrained, offering far less vocal variety, producing less childish, amusing or endearing sounds. The translation of songs particularly reflects this: though the musical score remains unchanged, French Lorelei uses a grounded timbre, favouring a consistent chest voice over a head voice, focusing her breath and delivery to give a rounded tone devoid of an airy quality, as such, her tone is not as sultry or playful as that of original Monroe/Lorelei.

Conclusion

Some might like it dubbed, and some might not. Regardless of value judgment, it needs to be recognized that adapting a film is a semiotically complex endeavour because films make use of a multiplicity of communication channels and artistic media. Nevertheless, if audiovisual

materials are to reach a broad foreign audience they need to be translated. This chapter presented a method to analyse the whole of a performance; I called for a reassessment not only of text translation, but also construction of the actors' bodily movements, their tonal diversity and facial expressions. My point was not to criticize the work of artists involved in the dubbing process but to raise awareness regarding what needs to be considered when translating an audiovisual product, which goes beyond interlingual translation to the intersemiotic translation of vocal timbre, register, rhythm, pace and dynamic. We saw that the French Lorelei is not as multilayered as her American counterpart due to the lack of vocal consideration as part of the translation process. Ideally, professionals involved in language transfer for the screen need to consider equally actors' performances, body language, spoken and sung voice as well as linguistic aspects since they all complement each other and impact on the way we experience the characters.

¹ 'Accepter le doublage, c'est cesser de croire à l'unicité de l'individu' (Chion, 1985, 74).

² Anon., 'Marylin Monroe', <http://www.marilynmonroe.ca/camera/about/facts/voice.html> (last accessed August 2011).

³ It must be noted that that during the song 'Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend' it is actually Marni Nixon's voice dubbing the phrase 'these rocks don't lose their shape', especially notable are the notes in the upper register ('no's): this has been approached as a very controversial topic: see the following interview with Nixon, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-lt1vAbtZs> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-lt1vAbtZs> (last accessed July 2011).

